THE Strong Man Armed CAST OUT, And his GOODS SPOILED:

Or, the Poor Man sitting at Jesus's Feet clothed, and in his Right Mind.

Being a True Convert's Testimony of the Power of the Lord, in turning the Soul from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.

Wherein is clearly manifested, that there is Light in every Man and Woman, which discovers their Conditions, bears a faithful Testimony against Sin, is the Reprover of all Unbelief and Unrighteousness both in Heart and Life, and is the Mighty Power of God for Salvation to all that believe in it and obey it.

And herein it is evidently proved, That they are none of the Ministers of Christ that Oppose this Doctrine, with one infallible Character of the Real Gospel-Ministers; and most of the weighty Objections answered.

Formerly given forth in Writing unto my Relations and Acquaintance, the Professors, called *Independents*, in *Nottinghamshire*; declaring the just Cause of my leaving their Assemblies. Together with a tender Invitation to all the Honest-hearted, to come out of their *dead Forms*, and walk in the *Light of the Lord*.

By James Jackson, *formerly a Parish Priest, and a Teacher amongst the* Independents; *and now through the exceeding Riches of God's Love, am made willing to take up the Daily Cross, and walk with the despised Followers of the Lamb, in Scorn called* Quakers.

This is a Marvelous Thing, O ye Priests and Professors, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine Eyes. Was it ever known, that ever any man opened the Eyes of one that was born blind?

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TO
My Loving Friends, Kindred, AND ACQUAINTANCE;

The *Tender*, *Sober* and *Conscientious Professors* amongst the People call'd *Independents*, in the County of

NOTTINGHAM.

THe Scriptures declare of a Man which had an Unclean Spirit, who had his dwelling among the Tombs, and no man could bind him, no not with Chains; because he had been often bound with Chains and Fetters, and the Chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the Fetters broken in pieces; And being driven of the Devil into the Wilderness, he was so unruly and fierce, tearing his Cloaths, and cutting his Flesh, that no man could tame him: But after the Lord Jesus had healed this poor Creature, and effected such an extraordinary Change, as caused Astonishment and Admiration in the Beholders; for it is said, That when they who had known him before, now saw such a palpable Alteration, he that was called Legion Sitting, and Cloathed, and in his Right Mind, they were afraid: and Jesus said unto him, Go home to thy Friends, and tell them how Great Things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had Compassion on thee.

And truly Friends, this day in my Particular is this Scripture fulfilled in your Eyes; my Ungodly, Dissolute, Debauched and Extravagant Course of Life hath been known to most of you, when I sinned after strong Convictions, serious Admonitions and Reproofs, Vows, Promises and Resolutions, against known Scripture-Rules, Inward Light and Religious Education, breaking and violating all these Bonds and Obligations (which as so many Chains and Fetters one would think might be sufficient to tame and restrain the unruly Lusts of Youth) whereby the Souls of some of the tenderest and chiefest of you have been grieved, exceedingly wounded and exercised, endeavouring and earnestly travelling with Prayers and Tears for my Recovery. Wherefore seeing the Lord hath passed by me when I was in my Blood, and pitied me, and said unto me, Live; *For it was the Lord only who saw my Way, and healed me, and restored Comforts to me and my Mourners by the effectual Calling of his Grace,* REVEALING HIS SON IN ME, *and hath spared me as a Living Monument of his Patience, Endless Mercy and Compassion: I therefore in the powerful Constrainings of this Love, am unwilling to eat my Morsel alone, or to hide my Talent in the Earth; but with* Sampson, *having tasted some Sweetness and Strength from the Lord, do commend my Experiences unto you my Friends and Relations, declaring unto you how great Things the Lord hath done for me, and had Compassion on me, in turning me from Darkness into his Marvellous Light, and from the power of Satan into the Kingdom of his dear Son; To whom be Glory, Praise and Obedience for evermore.*

James Jackson.

THE Strong Man Armed CAST OUT, And His Goods Spoiled, &c.

IN the time of my greatest Pollution and Iniquity, while I fulfilled the Lusts of the Flesh with Greediness, for many years before that Change and Reformation was discerned in me at which ye rejoyced, even in the worst of my time; I testifie in the Presence of the Lord, that then I met with real and immediate Reproofs, Rebukes and Convictions from something that did often Awaken, Judge and Condemn me in my own Conscience, but knew not what it was, nor whence it came; and because Iniquity was risen in me to an exceeding masterless height, these Rebukes which I know were from a contrary Principle to Sin, prevailed not, although at some times they were as Powerful and Terrible as the Hand-Writing upon the Wall before *Belshazzer*, whereby my Countenance hath been changed, my Thoughts troubled, so that the Joynts of my Loins were losed, and my Knees smote one against another; then thought I to redress this Sorrow by going into Merry and Pleasant Company, essaying to divert that inward Perplexity by outward Jollity, as Drinking, Gameing, Musick, &c. but those Diversions were unable to still and quiet these Tempestuous Surging Waves, and were no more effectual to heal the Wound of my Sin-smitten Conscience, then if a man should endeavour to quench Fire by pouring Oyl thereon; for I found by woful Experience, that these unwarrantable Courses

encreaſed the Flame, and added yet more Weight to the firſt Burden: Then have I many times ſolemnly vowed, promiſed and reſolved, To break off and ceaſe from all Ungodly Practices; and in keeping and obſerving theſe Covenants I have found ſome Eaſe and Quietneſs for a time; but as ſoon as new Sins were committed, then aroſe freſh Occaſions of Sorrow, Trouble and Terror; and after this manner I continued many years, until the Lord was pleaſed of his infinite Wiſdom and Faithfulneſs to hedge up my Way with Remarkable and Extraordinary Providences, blaſting all Purpoſes and Deſigns, and cauſed Afflictions, Loſſes and Diſappointments to come upon my outward Eſtate, Horror and Perplexity upon my Soul, a moſt Violent and Raging Feaver upon my Body, and at the ſame time above an Hundred Miles from all Relations, Friends and Kindred; at which time, being in a moſt Wretched, Deplorable and Succourleſs Condition, finn'd my ſelf almoſt out of all the Comforts of this Life, and any Hope of Intereſt in a better; being under this great Diſtreſs, and caſt out to the loathing of my own Perſon, and had all my Sins ſet in order before me, whereupon I was forced ſeriouſly to conſider my Wayes, and found no place to eſcape the Wrath of the Highly-provoked God; at which time I had no Benefit of any Outward Help, Teaching or Counſel; but he, who before had been my Reprover, was then my only Teacher, who ſealed Inſtruction upon my Soul, whoſe Voice I heard, which did ſhake and ſhake the Heavens, and the Earth alſo; and cauſed me to cry out, *Lord, What wouldeſt thou have me to do?* And being brought to the Foot of God, could truly ſay, *Speak now Lord, for thy Servant heareth:* And abiding in this broken and ſhattered State, I clearly felt the Judgment of the Lord powerfully at work in my Soul, as an Ax at the Root of the Tree, and as a Refiner's Fire, till the Life and Power of Sin was ſlain, ſubdued and mortified perfectly in my Will and Affections; then was the Lord Jeſus revealed in me whom I had pierced; the New Birth Diſcerned, which is created after God in true Holineſs; and the Immortal, Pure, Precious Seed, of the Eternal God, which ever before had been preſſed down, trodden under and held in Bondage, aroſe; yea, the Tender Plant of his own Right Hand ſprung up in me, panting and vehemently breathing after, and never ſince could be ſatisfied but

with

with his Living Presence. Behold! these things worketh the Lord oftentimes with men, looking upon men; And if any say, *I have sinned, and perverted that which is Right, and it profited me not*, he will deliver his Soul from going into the Pit, and his Life shall see the Light. And this is the Sum of the Confession which I was not ashamed to witness in your publick Assemblies, both at *Nottingham* and other places, in the year 1668.

Objection. But it is probable some of you will object, saying, *After this Change was wrought, thou didst Joyn to our Assemblies, Owned us, Prayed with us, Preached amongst us, and seemed to enjoy Refreshings and Satisfaction in our Assemblies; wherefore then art thou now departed from us, and gone to the* Quakers?

Answer 1. Notwithstanding that great and notable Work begun in my Soul, and in some measure effected by the Mighty Power of the Lord, yet was there after some time a certain Deadness, Coldness and Darkness drawn over me again, occasioned through Weakness, Unwatchfulness and Formality, whereby that good Condition was lost; nevertheless I found and felt tender Breathings moving in me, thirsting and seeking for renewed Testimonies of the Love of God, then in the Simplicity and Uprightness of my Heart, not knowing a more likely way to obtain Satisfaction, I joyned to your Society; and can truly affirm (though I now see it was no better then seeking the Living among the Dead) that the Lord was pleased in the Condescensions of his Love, many times to stoop down, and reach forth from the openings of his Bosom Refreshings and Nourishment to that tender Babe of his own begetting, yea, while I frequented your Assemblies.

Answ. 2. And as I continued Faithful and Obedient to that measure of Light and Knowledge, which was revealed in me, it is well known to all, or the most of you, what Censures, Opposition and Contradiction, both I and the plain Scripture-Truths, which I declared in your Assemblies, suffered from many of your Brethren, charging me, That I was leading into *Quakerism*; long

long before I understood either by word or Writing what the *Quakers* held.

Answ. 3. But however, these Censures occasioned a free and impartial Search into the *Quakers* Principle, Doctrine and Practice; for verily, before I was as much afraid of the *Quakers* as ye can be: But standing single in the Will and Counsel of the Lord, desirous to prove all things and hold fast that which is good, abandoning all Consultations with Flesh, was resolved to cease from Man, and to cleave unto the Truth, as the Lord should reveal and discover the same to me, waiting in this Unbyassed, Unprejudiced and Disengaged Frame, examining carefully the Principle, Foundation, Doctrine and Practice of this Despised Holy People, great Clearness and Satisfaction arose in my Soul; for as Face answered Face in a Glass, so were the Truths delivered by them, owned and embraced by the Witness of God in my own Conscience; and the same Spirit, Light, Life and Power, which is manifest in them, I came to feel in a measure in my own Particular: And yet for all this, before I came to any visible Closure with them, I sate down, and counted the Cost, and am made willing freely to endure the Cross, and undergo the World's Reproach and Shame, knowing, that whoever will be Christ's Disciple must deny himself, and take up his Cross daily and follow him.

And truly Friends, the Day of the Lord's Power is come and felt, whereby I am made willing to forsake Fathers and Mothers, Brethren and Sisters, Parsonages and all kind of Ecclesiastical Promotions, Friends, Honours, Pleasures, Profits, Houses, Lands, Goods, yea, and Life it self, to follow the Lamb, and fall in with his Interest, as it is only witnessed and embraced by and amongst the Children of Light, by the World called *Quakers*.

Answ. 4. But if it were possible, I desire to make clear to your Satisfaction, that there was sufficient Ground for me; and so there is for you, who have any Tenderness and Breathings in your Souls after the Lord, to separate your selves from the Tents of those Ungodly Men, your Teachers, who are no better then Filthy Dreamers,

Blind

Blind Guides and Belly-Gods, who belch out nothing but Blaſphemies, Lyes, Slanders, Falſe Accuſations and Evil Speeches againſt God and Chriſt, his Wayes, Truth and People; and this I ſee and declare againſt them in the Light: For, verily there is, and I witneſs it, an Honeſt, Gracious, Tender Principle in many of you, called *Independents*, which kindles in you perfect Hatred againſt Sin, and unſatisfied real Breathings and Pantings after the Senſible Living Preſence of the Lord; But your Leaders cauſe you to Err, and ye are ſcattered upon the dark and barren Mountains: And this I teſtifie in the Name of the Living God, That it will be ſo with you while ye follow theſe Wandring Stars, Clouds without Rain, Seducing Spirits, your Paſtors and Teachers, who are Ravening Wolves and Miniſters of Antichriſt, whom ye ought not to receive into your Houſes, nor bid them *God ſpeed*; For,

(1.) They are altogether Ignorant of the True God; and all the Knowledge that theſe men pretend to have of the Deity, is attained by Reading and Hear-ſay; for they will confidently affirm, That *Viſion and Immediate Revelation is ceaſed*: Judge ye therefore what Knowledge theſe men have of God, when the Scriptures ſay, *No man knows the Father but they to whom the Son reveals him.*

(2.) They Reproach and deſpiſe Jeſus Chriſt, the only Son of God, of whom the Scriptures witneſs and teſtifie to be the True Light, *which enlightens every man that comes into the World*: But they are not afraid to ſay, *The Light in every man is but a Natural Light, and at the beſt not able to ſave thoſe who believe in it and obey it.* And to diſcover themſelves more plainly to be the Miniſters of Antichriſt, they are not aſhamed to deny that Chriſt is come in the Fleſh: indeed both they and their Grandmother, the Church of *Rome*, are willing to confeſs that Chriſt *was* come; but the Scripture is plain, That *every Soul that confeſſeth not that Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, the ſame is Antichriſt.*

(3.) They fear not daily to Blaſpheme the Holy Spirit of God; but call it *A Spirit of Deluſion*, and *A Spirit of Error*; and moſt preſumptuouſly ſay of them that are ſanctified, guided, taught and anointed by the Holy Ghoſt, That *they are led by the Spirit of the Devil.*

(4.) They trample under Foot the Blood of the Covenant, counting it a Weak and Unholy Thing, while they impudently affirm, That *the best of God's Saints* (yea, if he had no purer Saints then they are) *cannot be free from sin whilst they breath upon Earth, when the Scriptures* witness, *that the Blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.*

(5.) They preach another Gospel: Now the Scripture is plain, That *if any man, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto us, then what we have already received, let him be accursed, Gal.* 1. 9. Now how can ye believe that they are Ministers of the Gospel, when they know not what the true Gospel is; For, saith Paul, *I certifie unto you, Brethren, that the Gospel which I preach is not after man; for I neither received it, neither was I taught it of man, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ*: But your Teachers deny any such Revelation in these dayes; wherefore it is hereby evident, that they are Thieves, crept in some other wayes, and bring another Gospel, then that whereof *Paul* was a Minister, as he witnessed to the *Colossians*, Chap. 1. 23. saying. *Be not moved from the Hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached* IN EVERY CREATURE *under Heaven, whereof I* Paul *am a Minister. And this is the Word of Faith which we preach, even Christ, the Word, who is in thy Heart and in thy Mouth*, saith *Paul, Rom.* 10. which all have heard, and the Sound thereof is gone through the whole World: But these men labour to pervert the Gospel, and turn men from it, saying, *That the Light of Christ in every man's Conscience is not the Substance of the Gospel, nor the Power of God to Salvation.*

ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει
In universa creatura.

(6.) They have indeed a Form of Godliness, but want the Power; and well for them if that was the worst: But they magnifie and cry up a Form, and utterly reject, despise, and deny the Power, which is the immortal Seed, Christ Jesus, the Light within; and from such we are commanded to turn away.

Their Prayers and Sermons are made, contrived, studied and composed in their own Time, Wills and Wisdom; but are Strangers to the Life, Power and Spirit of Prayer: and deny that Christ speaks in any; which is evident that he doth not speak in them.

They

They cry up, and plead earneſtly for Water-Baptiſm, which Chriſt never Adminiſtred, Inſtituted or Commanded to be Adminiſtred; and yet they call it Chriſt's Ordinance: Some ſaying, *Without this no Salvation*; and the reſt ſay, *With ſuch as wilfully neglect this, have no Communion*; But if they had ever undergone and felt the Powerful, Lively, Purifying and throughly cleanſing Efficacy of the Spirit's Baptiſm, they would know it ſufficient, without the Help of their Dead, Cold, Idolized Water-Works.

They are greatly affected with that Bread and Wine, which after breathing upon by the Paſtor, is not Common, but Be-ſainted, and ſo comes to be called the Lord's Supper: It is evident hereby, that they never did eat of that Fleſh which is Bread indeed, nor drink of that Blood which is Drink indeed.

Now it is certain, that all Pictures, Images, Shadows, Reſemblances, Figures and Repreſentations, which any people live in and plead for, do clearly argue, That they are deſtitute of the Power, Life and Subſtance, yea, who ely ignorant of his Living Preſence, in whom is hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge: And as they believe in one at a great Diſtance from them, out of their View and Knowledge; ſo is it very convenient, they think, to neceſſitate theſe Carnal Ordinances to reduce their unmindful and forgetful Thoughts into more ſerious Remembrance, till he come: And yet theſe men will condemn the *Papiſts*, though they be far ſhort of their Devotion in this very Thing.

And ſo are they ſeen in the Light to be Wolves in Sheep's Cloathing, ravened from the Life and Power of thoſe Saints, whom they are imitating upon the Stage of their Formal Profeſſion.

Wherefore, my dear Frieds, Come out from amongſt them, and be ye ſeparate, leſt ye be drunk with the Wine of their Fornication; For verily, the Lord is riſen to plead his own Cauſe, and be a ſwift Witneſs againſt theſe Sorcerers, who are ſporting themſelves in the day time: And as thoſe Souldiers regarded not a Crucified Jeſus ſo near them, but their Minds were taken up in parting & caſting Lots for his Raiment; ſo theſe men are ſo exerciſed in the Out-ſides of Religion, Ordinances (ſo called) and

Worſhip, that they are not at all concerned with the In-ſide, which is the Life and Power of Godlineſs, even Chriſt within, the Hope of Glory.

Anſw. 5. And Laſtly; As I have plainly declared the Reaſons of my departing from your Aſſemblies, ſo ſhall I witneſs faithfully to the Truth, as it is known and practiſed by the Holy People of God, called *Quakers*, with whom I now walk, and of whom I declare and teſtifie.

Firſt, That they are built and rooted in & upon the Right Foundation, even Chriſt Jeſus, the Lord; who is their Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption, in whom alone they are juſtified by Faith, and ſaved.

That Root from whence they receive Life, Nouriſhment, Power and Growth, is the only Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, the Rock of Ages, the Stone which your Builders and their Brethren, the Prieſts, ever rejected, diſallowed and ſet at nought, which is, *Chriſt in us, the Hope of Glory*. Whereupon it is evident that we differ in the Root from all the People in the World, though of ſeveral Forms and Perſwaſions: For plainly, the *Papiſts*, *Prelates*, *Presbyters*, *Baptiſts* and *Independents*, though they all differ in their Forms, Appearances, and Circumſtantial Opinions, yet do they all agree and meet in one and the ſame Faith, Foundation and Root.

The Words, Writings, Declarations and Teſtimonies of the Saints, recorded in Scripture, are the Foundation and Ground of all the Profeſſing People in the World; and all of them being Strangers to that one Spirit that gave forth the Scriptures, are run into ſeveral Sects and Opinions, as they do carnally underſtand and conceive they have Rule and Teaching in the Bible: But however, they will own no other Light, Law, Goſpel, Rule, Revelation and Word of God, but their Bibles. But now this peculiar People, whom the Lord hath gathered from amongſt all the *Babyloniſh* Confuſions and Diviſions under Heaven, are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-Stone, in whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth into an Holy Temple in the Lord.

So

So that these receive immediate Light, Life, Power, Teaching, Guidance, Rules, Refreshings, Revelation, Peace and Satisfaction from that Word which was before the Worlds were made; even that Life, Power, Foundation, Root, Spring and Fountain, in and by which the Holy Prophets and Apostles were Quickened, Enlightened, Anointed, Inspired, and gave forth the Scriptures, which is Christ Jesus, the Word of God, the Power of God, the Son of God, the Light Within, the only Saviour of the World.

2*dly*, Their Faith is the Faith of the Son of God; Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of it: It is not a Dead Historical Faith, but the Spirit and Life of Faith, and no less then the Resurrection and Life of the Immortal Seed, Enlightening, Quickening, Reforming and Renewing the whole Man; And this is that Faith by which Sin is subdued, slain and mortified perfectly, the Heart purified, the World conquered, the Soul sanctified, justified and saved perfectly: But the Faith of all others is an Unholy, Dead, Imperfect Faith; it sanctifies but in part (as they say) and so will never save to the uttermost.

3*dly*, Their Knowledge is Spiritual and Experimental, from the immediate Unction of the Holy Ghost; what is known, proceeds not from Hear-say, but divine Revelation: All that are born of the Spirit are taught of God, and need not that any say, *Know the Lord*; for they all know him, from the greatest to the least: This is Life Eternal to know God, who is Light, yea, the Father of Lights; and that the Light within is the Son of God, whom he hath sent; so to know as to live and abide in his Light, is Life Eternal: And this is that Mystery which is hid from the Wise and Prudent, and is revealed unto Babes; for the World by all its Wisdom knows not God, neither doth the Carnal Man (though never so great a Schollar) discern the things of God; for they are Spiritually discerned.

And as Christ was Bodily in the World, and the World knew him not, no, not the great Doctors and Leaders of those several Sects and Religions in that day, as the *Samaritans*, *Herodians*, *Scribes*, *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, they knew him not; and therefore the man that was born blind wondred, *This is a Marvelous Thing*,

Thing, saith he, *that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine Eyes: It was never known that any man opened the Eyes of one that was born blind.*

Even so it is now; Christ is spiritually in the World, and the World knoweth him not; no, not the *Popes*, *Prelates*, *Presbyters*, *Priests* and *Pastors* of all the Religions in the World, they know him not, but say, *It is the Devil*, or at best, *but the Light of Nature*; and so they know not from whence he is, yet hath he inlightned Thousands: And it was never known that the *Devil* or *Nature* converted any to the Lord, that have been Naturalized to Sin.

4*thly*, Their Humility, which is the emptying of themselves of all their own Righteousness, Wills, Wisdom and Self-Exaltation; and is a real, inward, spiritual Abasement and Subjection to the Life, Power & Kingdom of Christ Jesus, manifested in Spirit, ruling and dwelling in their mortal Bodies: And so this True, Humble, Meek and Low Frame of Spirit proceeds from their experimental Knowledge of Christ's living Presence in them; whereas they that know God and Christ only by Reading and Hear say, with a Literal and Historical Knowledge, they are blown, swell'd and puffed up with Airy Notions, Vain Boastings and Self-Conceitedness.

5*thly*, Their Unity, which consists not only in the Oneness of Opinion and Judgment, but proceeds from Unity of Spirit: And their Love one to another is not from a Natural but a Heavenly and Spiritual Principle; It is not the Love of one man to another, but it is the Love of God shed abroad in their Hearts, which maketh them all of one Mind, and all speak, write and witness the same thing: For as the Vital Spirits in the Natural Frame have its Operation through every Member, it makes the Eyes, Ears, Tongue, Hands and Feet, to see, hear, speak, work and walk, and yet but one Soul that moves and quickens all through its speedy Entercourse into every Member and Part of the Body; so is it here, the Love, Peace, Concord and Unity amongst these is remarkable; it flows from the Fountain of Love, and influenceth the whole Body, which makes them in all their Ways, Doctrine and Practice but as One Man: And though but a Poor, Weak, Harmless,

leſs, Innocent and Inoffenſive People, are rendred through their Unity and Love, as Terrible as an Army with Banners.

6thly, Their Patience is invincible: To them is this Grace given, *Not only to Believe in the Name of Jeſus, but alſo to Suffer for his ſake.* And as the Lord hath made them Bleſſed and Glorious Inſtruments in his Hand to do his Will, ſo hath he made them contented to be perfected through ſufferings: For though the Lord hath been eſpecially preſent with them, yet the World hath been eſpecially againſt them; not for their own ſakes (for they are the only Innocent and Harmleſs People upon Earth) but for Chriſt's ſake in them; yea, becauſe there is more of God among theſe men then others, therefore are they hated of all men, and every where amongſt all Religions evil ſpoken of: for the World moſt hates where there is moſt of God; therefore the Single-hearted may gueſs where there is moſt of God, by obſerving where the greateſt Hatred of the World lies.

7thly, Their Faithfulneſs to the Truth, Wayes and Intereſt of Chriſt; How have they gone up and down in Wearineſs and Labours, in Hunger and Nakedneſs, in Dangers and Deaths, to bear a Faithful Teſtimony againſt the Sin, Vanity, Falſe Worſhip and Abomination of the Times? When did they ſhrink in the leaſt, or turn back from their Duty, when Loſs of Eſtate, Liberty, yea, Danger of Baniſhment attended it? When did they Deny their Maſter or his Commands, or Betray his Intereſt before King or Counſel-Table, Judges, Juſtices or Biſhops, by Subſcribing, Engaging, Swearing, Bowing or Complying to the Wills and Humors of men? Nay, they have witneſſed a Good Confeſſion, and ſpoken of his Teſtimonies before all theſe, and were not aſhamed: When did they meet at Night for fear of being ſeen, or creep in at Back-Doors into Cellars, Holes and ſecret Places to hide themſelves from the Knowledge of the Adverſary? But the time would fail me to ſpeak of their Self-denyal, Temperance, Sobriety, Innocency, Doctrine, Order, Worſhip, their Spirit of Prayer and Watchfulneſs, Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt: The King's Daughter is all Glorious within, and her Rayment is of pure Gold. Therefore in Truth and Sincerity to them I will ſay, *Who is like unto thee, O People, ſaved by the Lord,*

the

the Shield of thy Help & the Sword of thy Excellency? Thine Enemies shall be found Lyars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their High Places.

Yet to make it appear more plain, that this Light within, which indeed is our Principle, is the Truth, and the Mighty Power of God for Salvation to all that believe in it and obey it, will be further manifested by its Nature and Effects.

The NATURE *of this Light.*

It is a Living, Immortal, Unchangeable, Undefiled, Righteous and Perfect Principle of pure Holiness, which never fell, comply'd with, or consented to any Evil; But hath ever opposed and stood cross to the whole corrupt Nature, Will and Affections of faln man: For I know that all *Adam's* Posterity are by Nature faln under Guilt, Pollution, Condemnation and Darkness. So that the Light I speak of is nothing of Man's Nature, but of the pure Divine Nature, even that Seed promised *Gen.* 3. 15. yea, the Son of God, which is sent into the World, *that whosoever believe on him should not perish, but have Eternal Life.*

The EFFECTS *of this Light.*

When Christ was upon Earth, *John* saw and bare record, *That he was the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World*: Yet the Lord said, *A greater Testimony have I, then that of* John; *for the Works that I do in my Father's Name, they testifie of me*: So say we of him now; he is spiritually the Light in man, however sleighted, rejected and undervalued by men; yet is he chosen of God, and pretious, the alone Saviour of the World; and the Works he accomplishes daily in the Souls and Consciences of men testifie the same; wherefore, if his Works be not such as none else can do, believe him not.

Effect I. Hereby the Sinner is convinced, judged, reproved and condemned plainly and experimentally, for all the Sins that ever he committeth, of what Kind or Nature soever they be: *Come* (said the Woman of *Samaria*) *and I will*
John 4. 29. *shew you a Man that hath told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?*

Effect II.

Effect 2. *The Fear of the Lord*, which *is the Beginning of Wisdom*, is never truly placed in the Heart, till this Principle be witnessed and owned; for while a Man looks at God and Christ at a great Distance, circumscribed in some Place beyond the Stars, the Sinner rageth & is confident; but when the Mind & Understanding is perswaded that the Pure, Holy, Righteous, Omnipotent and Omnipresent Lord God is not only nigh him, but within him also, he is then brought into awful Apprehension of the most High, & forced to cry out with *Job*, *I have heard of thee before by the Hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye hath seen him*: by this Means the Mind is melted into much Tenderness and Brokenness, and with the Prophet complaineth, *Woe is me*; *for I am undone*. Now consider this all ye that despise the Light within, *This is a Marvelous Thing* (said the Young Man) *that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened my Eyes*; *since the World began was it not heard that any Man opened the Eyes of one that was born Blind.* Joh. 9. 30

Effect 3. Waiting humbly in this pure Dread & Fear of the Lord, Man's Insufficiency to answer the Requirings of the Holy Commandment is discerned; but perfect Power and Strength in Christ the Light, is discovered; for indeed, *in him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*: and standing up to the Manifestation of this Light, the Judgment of the Lord is felt as a *Refiner's Fire*, which throughly purifies, and as *Fullers Soap* that leaves no Spot; then the Soul knows that flaming Sword, which kept fain Man out of Paradise; but now discerns the new Birth, which bears the Image of the Heavenly Nature; the strong Man armed, which before held Possession, Bound, casting out, and all his Goods spoiled by the Powerful Entrance of Christ into his Temple.

Effect 4. Waiting and abiding in this *Light* for Counsel and Teaching, the whole Man being emptyed of his own Will and Wisdom, standing singly and purely in the Will of the Lord, ready to be disposed, ordered and guided universally by the Light, the Soul now thrives in the Fear and Love of God, bringeth forth the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness, and liveth in that Faith which purifies the Heart, and getteth Victory over the World, Sin and Death.

These Things, with many other which might be mentioned, do make it manifest, that whoever deny, despise and reproach the Light within,

within, deny God, the Father of Lights, despise Jesus Christ, the Light & Saviour of the World, and reproach the Holy Spirit which maketh manifest and reproveth the Sins of Men: Wherefore all ye Professors that look out for another Saviour, remember the Answer of our Lord Jesus unto *John Baptist*, upon the like Account, *Art thou he, or shall we look for another? Go* (saith Christ) *and tell him that sent you, what you have heard and seen; the Blind receive their Sight, the Deaf hear, &c.* Even the same in a spiritual Sense may be as really affirmed of the *Light within*; hereby have the Eyes, Ears and Mouthes of the Blind, Deaf and Dumb been opened, the Lame, Lepers and the Dead, cured, cleansed and quickned, and the Poor, whom none of the Proud, Covetous Clergy (so called) regardeth, they by Vertue hereof, have the Everlasting Gospel preached unto them; and forever blessed are they who are not offended in the *Light*, but love it, believe in it, and obey it in all things. Luke 7. 22.

Object. 1. *But we are afraid of being deceived; this is a new and strange Doctrine; did ever Christ or his Apostles bid Men believe and obey the Light within?*

Answ. 1. Art thou not already deceived? Consider therefore well thy Condition, if thou art delivered out of the deceived State, in which the greatest Part of the World yet remains; art thou yet in a sinful transgressed Estate? *For the Woman being deceived was in the Transgression*, 1 Tim. 2. 14.

Answ. 2. We that believe and abide in the Light, know that we are not deceived, neither seek we to deceive any, neither fear we any deceiving us: though indeed while we walked in the Imaginations of our own deceitful Hearts, and warmed our selves by the Sparks of our own kindling, that then as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his Subtilty, so our Minds were corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Jesus; in which State we see many yet to stand whom the Lord will undeceive in his own Time; *But Evil Men and Seducers will wax worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

Answ. 3. Never fear Deceit in such who turn you to the *Light*, whereby ye may discern betwixt Good and Bad, Truth and Falsehood; plainly, I would much fear that he had a Design to cheat me, who leads into the *Dark*, and denyes the Benefit of the Light.

Answ. 4.

Answ. 4. Search with Freedom, and examine throughly this Doctrine, condemn it not unheard, speak not Evil of any Thing unknown; for so mayst thou soon condemn the Innocent, and make thy self guilty.

Answ. 5. Understand fully what we hold before thou contend against us, lest if thou want this Patience and Wisdom, thou oppose not so much our Judgment as thy own Conceit; better it is to hear a Man's Mind with Meekness, then hastily to guess at it.

Answ. 6. Be not wedded to thy own Opinion, nor Wise in thy own Conceit, so as to build upon thy own or other Mens Judgments, and rest satisfied therein, because it is strengthned by Multitude, Custom and Antiquity; for undoubtedly many have erred grossly in those Things they have thought themselves Infallible; better it is to cleave to the clear and naked Truths of God alone, then to follow the Doctrines of the most learned and eminent Professors in the World, when they *hold* not *the Truth as it is in Jesus*.

Answ. 7. Reproach not this Doctrine, saying, *It is New and Strange*, or that *thou never heardst it so before*; for this discovers thy *Ignorance* rather then my *Error*: and that which at present seems to thee to be a *New Error*, being rightly examin'd by the *Scripture*, will prove an *Old Truth*: If therefore thou wilt needs reject whatsoever savours of *Novelty*, how shall the *Truths we yet know* not be brought in, and the *Ignorance* which yet remains be purg'd out?

Answ. 8. This is the same Doctrine which was preach'd by our blessed *Saviour*, and his holy *Prophets* & *Apostles* since the World began, and which was believ'd and obey'd by all the faithful Saints and Servants of God since the Creation; the same which the Lord gave in Charge to the *Israelites* by the Mouth of *Moses*, saying, *Behold, I send my Angel before thee to keep thee in the Way, and to bring thee into the Place which I have prepared,* Exod. 23. 20. *Beware of him and obey his Voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your Transgressions, for my Name is in him: but if thou shalt indeed obey his Voice, and do all that I speak, then will I be an Enemy to thy Enemies, and an Adversary to thy Adversaries.* Numb. 15. 30. *But the Soul that doth ought presumptuously, reproacheth the Lord, and shall be cut off from his People; because he despised the Word of the Lord.* Now what is this Word of the Lord?

It is not the Scriptures; for there were no *Bibles* many Years after that time, but the LIGT WITHIN. *It is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off, but the Word is very nigh unto thee, even in thy Heart & in thy Mouth, that thou shouldst hear it and do it*: Wherefore *David* affirmeth, that *if a Young man take heed to this Word, he shall cleanse his Wayes thereby*; and calls it *a Lamp to his Feet, and a Light to his Paths*. This is also testified by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Thou shalt hear a Word behind thee, saying, This is the Way, walk in it; in which Path the wayfaring Men, though Fools, cannot err*. And our blessed Saviour doth confirm this Doctrine, saying, *Seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*; which *Kingdom* he told the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, was *within* them. Thus *Peter* preacht *Christ* the Light; *For* Moses *truly said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, him shall you hear in all things; and it shall come to pass, that every Soul that heareth not that Prophet, shall be cut off, &c.* Wherefore unto you first God having raised up his Son *Jesus*, sent him to bless you in turning every one of you from his Iniquities; and thus *Paul* was sent, *To turn men from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*. Now, is not this *Darkness* within, and the *Light* within? And is it not an inward Turning, *To seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us*? And doth not *James* turn men to the *Light within*, writing to Sinners, *Such as were in Filthiness and Superfluity of Naughtiness*, Doth not he bid them *receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word, which was able to save their Souls*; which *Peter* calleth the *sure Word of Prophecy, unto which ye do well to give heed as unto a Light that shineth in a dark Place*? But most take the *Word* for the *Scriptures*; but we know no *Word* but *Christ Jesus*, the *Light*, and *his Name* only *is called the Word of God*: Therefore, *say not in thy Heart, who shall bring and reveal Christ unto us? for the Word is nigh thee, even in thy Heart and in thy Mouth*: Now this *Word* is *Christ*, the true Light in every man; wherefore saith our Lord Jesus, *While ye have the Light believe in the Light, that ye may be the Children*

Deut. 30. 11. to 14.

Psal. 119. 9, 105.

Isa. 30. 21.

Mat. 6. 33. Lu. 17. 21.

Acts 3. 22. vs. 23, 26.

Acts 26. 18.

Acts 17. 27.

Jam. 1. 21.

2 Pet. 1. 19.

Joh. 12. 36.

of

of the Light; As, *Abel* being guided by this Light, *through Faith was enabled to offer up a more acceptable Sacrifice then Cain*: In Obedience to this Enoch *walked with, and pleased God*; By this Noah *being warned, moved with Fear, prepared an Ark for the saving of his House*: By this *was* Abraham *called to leave his own Country and his Father's House*; and in Obedience to this *he departed, not knowing whether he went*: *Joseph* being guided by this, withstood the Temptations of his *Mrs*, though enforced with Importunity, Pleasure, Profit & Secresie: Hereby Moses *chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, then to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches then the Treasures of* Egypt, *and endured, as seeing him that is Invisible. And what shall I say more? for the Time would fail to tell of* Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jepthah, David, Samuel, *and of the Prophets, who by Faith*, and Obedience to the Light, *subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouths of Lyons, quenched the Violence of Fire: Some were tortured, not accepting Deliverance: Others had Tryal of cruel Mockings, Scourgings, Bonds, and Imprisonment, and Death.* And is still the same at this Day; for the *Light within* is the true Shepherd's Voice, which all the Lambs of Christ hear, obey and follow, to the Hazard of all that is dear to them.

Object. 2. *But thou denyest the Scriptures to be the Word of God, which is the Only Rule to judge of Doctrines, and a sure Weapon to resist Satan, and confute his Ministers; for it is very observable that Christ made Use of no other Means to overcome the Tempter, but Only the Scriptures, which are the Sword of the Spirit and the Word of God.*

Answ. 1 Plainly, I deny the Scriptures are either the Sword of the Spirit, or the Word of God: That the Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit, I own, and witness that it is sharper then a Two-edg'd Sword, like a Hammer and a Fire, the Ax at the Root of every corrupt Tree, and so are not the Scriptures; yea, the Word of the Lord is Unchangeable, Incorruptible and Eternal, without Beginning of Dayes, or End of Time; and so are not the Scriptures.

Answ. 2. Nevertheless, we prefer the Holy Scriptures as they were

were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God; and believe them to be a true Declaration of God and of his Word.

Answ. 3. Yet do we prefer Christ Jesus the Light, above the Scriptures; for in all Things he must have the Preheminence; therefore saith *John* the *Baptist*, *I prefer him before me, for he is before me*, though in Appearance *John* was seemingly before Christ; *Before* Abraham *was, I am*, said he: Wherefore know that we build not upon the Holy Prophets and Blessed Apostles, their Words, Works, Writings and Experiences; but we are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the Foundation and the chief Corner-Stone; so that we have not received our Light, Life, Peace, Comfort, Faith, Hope and Assurance from the Writings of the Saints, but from him that was their Light, Life, Hope, Root and Foundation, and have our Teaching from that Light, whereby *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob* and *Joseph* walked with and pleased God, long before any Scriptural Rules were manifested.

Answ. 4. Neither are the Scriptures the only Rule to judge of Doctrines; for we know the Scriptures are hard to be understood; and therefore Men in their carnal Wisdom are putting their several Meanings upon one and the same Scripture; wherefore we say, the Spirit of God is the only Judge of Doctrines, because he alone that gave forth knows the Meanings of Scriptures; 1 Cor. 2. 10. *For the Spirit searcheth all Things; yea, the Deep Things of God.*

Answ. 5. Nor yet do I believe that the Scriptures were the only Means which Christ made Use of to overcome and repel the Tempter in the Wilderness; for we observe, Satan pleaded Scripture as well as Christ, till he took indeed the Sword of the Spirit, which is his Divine *Power*, and commanded him, saying, *Get thee behind me Satan*; then the Devil left him, but not before he was thus expelled.

Object. 3. *But this Doctrine of the Light within is opposed by all the able learned Divines (so call'd) in the Nation; yea, the most eminent Preachers amongst the* Presbyters, Independents *and* Baptists, *do condemn it for Erroneous and Divelish Delusion.*

Answ. 1. It's true, this Doctrine hath been and is a Stone of Stumbling

Stumbling, & a Rock of Offence unto all Sorts & Forms of Profeſſors in the World; eſpecially, the *Prieſts & Preachers* are moſt inveterately incenſed againſt it, becauſe the Craft by which they have gotten great Gain, is hereby eſpecially impared; nevertheleſs, the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt it: the Truth is ſtrong and will prevail, yea, it doth and will flouriſh in Deſpight of all the Scorns, Injuries, Oppoſition and Villany of the World.

Anſw. 2. The Scriptures are plain, that *God hath hid theſe Things from the Wiſe and Prudent* in the World, *and hath revealed them unto Babes*: *Beho'd therefore ye Deſpiſers and wonder; for this is the Work which God hath wrought in your Day, which ye will not believe, though it be declared unto you.*

Anſw. 3. And as for thoſe Preachers among the *Presbyters*, &c. who oppoſe this Doctrine, this I affirm, and teſtifie againſt them, though they come in Sheeps Cloathing (that is) have gotten a more refined Way of Profeſſion then others, and cover themſelves with the Words of the Prophets and Apoſtles, yet inwardly are they Ravening Wolves, they are inwardly Ravened from the Light and Life of thoſe Saints, whoſe Words they have taken up; yea, it is an eaſie Thing to prove againſt the beſt of them, that they live in Sin and plead for it.

Anſw. 4. Whoever deny, reproach and oppoſe this Doctrine, are none of Chriſt's Miniſters, as will appear from a due Examination of their Call, Doctrine and Practice: Who ſent them? God or Man? What do they preach? the Word of God, or the Words of Men? Is their Life and Converſation Humble, Meek, Self-denying and Heavenly? Or is it not Proud, Fierce, Self-ſeeking and Worldly? Now our Lord Jeſus hath left upon Record one Infallible Rule, whereby we may know which are true Goſpel-Miniſters, and which are not: and as it is granted, that Chriſt was a true Goſpel-Miniſter; ſo it is expected, that all Goſpel-Miniſters be like him in their Meaſure; for ſaith Chriſt to his Father, *As thou ſent me into the World, ſo have I ſent them into the World*, Joh. 17. And when he ſent forth his Diſciples, to them he ſaith, *As the Father ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* Hereby then it will eaſily be diſcerned, that theſe Preachers, who ſo bitterly Rage and Rail againſt the *Light within*, are never an one of them Chriſt's Miniſters, but Idol-Shepherds, Lyars and Falſe Prophets.

Qualif.

Qualification 1. Christ was the Son of God, and known to be so before he undertook or exercised in the Ministry, for the Lord foreseeing what after came to pass by Peoples running into several Opinions and Doctrines of men, gave this Charge and Testimony from Heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear him*: In like manner every true Believer is a *Son of God*, generated of the immortal Seed, born anew by the Operation of the Spirit, made a real Partaker of the Divine Nature, liveth in and hath Union with God through Faith in Christ; for *to as many as receive him he giveth Power to become the Sons of God.*

Qualif. 2. He was immeasurably anointed with the Spirit, and was known to be so; for saith *John*, *He that sent me to baptize, the same said unto me, On whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is he*; So may true *Gospel-Ministers* be known, for they are as really anointed with the Holy Spirit of God, as Christ was, though not so equally; yea every believing Soul is indued with this Spirit; these are the Anointed ones of the Lord; and whoever want this Spirit, *they are none of his*: And as Christ commanded his Disciples *to abide at* Jerusalem *till they had received this Unction*; so whoever undertake to preach before they have receiv'd this Power from the Lord, they Run and he sent them not.

Qualif. 3. He endured and conquered the Assaults and Temptations of Satan in the Wilderness, by virtue of his Sonship and Unction, before he was ever known to preach the Gospel; in like manner all the true Children of God are taken into Fellowship with Christ in his Tryals, Temptations and Sufferings; but especially such as have been call'd unto more eminent & publick Work, have met with greatest Conflicts, Wrastlings and Temptations, that they might be kept humble before the Lord, and also be fitly disposed to speak a Word in due season for the Relief of such as are brought under the same Trouble.

Qualif. 4. In the Power, Virtue and Strength of his Sonship, Unction and Conquest, he went out and preached the Gospel, that is, proclaimed Glad Tidings of the Grace and Good-will of God to the Poor, and preached Peace to the Broken-hearted, testifying the Love of God to Mankind, in sending his Son to them to open their Blind Eyes, and recover them out of the Snare of the Devil; exhorting

exhorting Men to believe in the Light, leſt Eternal Darkneſs come upon them: And all that was done in his Miniſtry, was not from any outward Encouragement or Reward, but moved only hereunto from the Tenderneſs of his Pitty and Compaſſion to poor Sinners. So it is at this Day, all that are born of the Spirit are true Miniſters of the ſame Goſpel, and publiſh it freely in the Conſtrainings of the Love of God, which layes a Neceſſity upon them to miniſter freely without Expectation of Gifts and Rewards. But do they deſerve the Name of Goſpel-Miniſters, who preach another Doctrine then what Chriſt or his Apoſtles ever did, confidently affirming, *That the Doctrine of the Light within, or to ſay, the Light in every Man's Conſcience is the Light of Chriſt, this is Blaſphemy; but ill Men, that Light which doth convince them of Sin is not the Light of Chriſt, but Natural Conſcience, and therefore not able to ſanctifie and ſave ſuch as believe in it and obey it?* and yet they ſay, *There be ſome whom they call Saints and Believers, in whom there is true Saving Light; but as for the greateſt Part of the World, they are altogether deſtitute hereof*: and yet though they make a ſeeming Diſtinction between Saints and Sinners, yet they themſelves confeſs *they are Sinners*, yea, and believe *that they muſt be ſo while they breath upon Earth*: And thus are People held in Ignorance, Unbelief and Confuſion, their blind Guides having cauſed them to err from the Truth; for verely this hath been and is the Doctrine of theſe eminent Men.

Qualif. 5. That Goſpel which Jeſus Chriſt had preached, and witneſſed to in his holy Life, he confirmed and ſeal'd by his Death in his Blood; Now this Laſt is that which crowned and compleated his Miniſtry, and the ſame Spirit is in all the Faithful at this day, whereby Chriſt's Miniſters are enabled to declare the Truth in the Life and Power of the Eternal Word, without the Help and Aſſiſtance of acquired Parts, Arts and Studies; for to ſuch ſaith Chriſt, *It is not you that ſpeak, but the Spirit which ſpeaketh in you*; and thus declaring what they have ſeen, taſted and handled of the Word of Life, they are not aſhamed of their Work, nor afraid of Men; neither will they conceal their Meetings in Time of greateſt Danger, nor ſlip out at Back-Doors to avoid Sufferings; but are in a continual Readineſs and Preparedneſs to forſake all that is dear to them, rather then to turn their Backs upon the Work of God, or in the leaſt to

prove Unfaithful by Denying or Betraying the Truths of Christ: Wherefore now consider these things all ye *Admirers of Men*, and give place to the *Witness of God in your own Consciences*, and see if one of your Gifted Brethren, Pastors and Teachers be thus qualified.

Object. 4. *But the Scriptures are very plain, that Unbelievers and Reprobates are without Christ, as in* Ephes. 2. 12. *and* 2 Cor. 13 5. *wherefore though we do believe, that Christ is in every Believer, yet we cannot understand that the Light in every Man is the Light of Christ.*

Answ. 1. Indeed one of these Scriptures at first Appearance, seems to contradict all that hath been said before, it will be therefore necessary to speak to them severally. That in *Ephes.* 2. 12. plainly affirms, That before Conversion *they were without God, and without Christ in the World*: And truly, I can witness this Scripture fulfilled in my own Particular; for I know the Time when I was without Christ, and without God in the World, when I lived in Sinful Pleasures and Delights, fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh with Greediness; I lived then as if there was no God in the World, yea, without any awful Respect to the Eye of God and Christ; And yet I can as truly affirm, that at that Time the Light of Christ was in me testifying against my Iniquity: And this may seem a Mystery that a Measure of his Light should be within a Man, when that Man is without Christ; yet I have experienced the Truth hereof, and therefore testifie, that its one Thing for the Light of Christ to be in a Man, and another Thing for a Man to be in the Light of Christ; and thus it is, the Light of Christ may be in a Man, and yet that Man out of the Light of Christ; whereupon I affirm and declare, that the Light of Christ is in every Man; but no Man is in Christ till he be a new Creature.

And as to that other Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* This Place doth not at all oppose what before hath been written, if it be seriously considered, but doth greatly confirm the Truth of this Doctrine: If therefore by *Reprobates* be intended such as have sinned out the Day of Grace, and done Despight to the Strivings of the Spirit of God, as the old World did, yea, and as those eminent Professors whom *Stephen* reproveth, saying, *Ye stiff-necked*

and

and uncircumciſed in Heart and Ears, ye do alwayes reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt; as your Fathers did, ſo do ye, Acts 7. 51.

And as *Jeruſalem*, which remained Impenitent in the Day of Viſitation, till the Things of her Peace were hid from her Eyes, *Luke* 19.42. And as thoſe Gueſts *which had been often invited, and yet refuſed to come*, making light of thoſe many renew'd and reiterated Tenders of Grace, *entreating the Meſſengers ſpightfully and ſlew them, wherefore the King was wroth, and proteſted againſt them, that none of thoſe Murtherers ſhould taſte of his Supper*, Mat. 22. Or like that *Fig-Tree, which the Maſter of the Vineyard when he had come three Years expecting Fruit and found none, required the Dreſſer to cut it down and caſt it into the Fire*, Luke 13. 7. And like *thoſe, who had taſted of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Good Word of God, and of the Powers of the World to come; but after to fall away, and crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, & put him to open Shame, theſe bringing forth Thorns & Bryars are rejected, and are nigh unto Curſing, whoſe End is to be burned*, Heb. 6.7,8. And ſuch as the Lord complaineth of by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, ſaying, *They are all grievous Revolters, walking with Slanders; they are Braſs and Iron, they are all Corrupters, the Bellows are burnt, the Lead is conſumed of the Fire, the Founder melteth in Vain, for the Wicked are not pluck'd away; Reprobate Silver ſhall Men call them, becauſe the Lord hath rejected them*, Jer. 6. 29. And the Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly, that ſome *ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils, ſpeaking Lyes in Hypocriſie, having their Conſcience ſeared with an Hot Iron, and ſo are paſt feeling*, 1 Tim 4.2. Now if *Reprobates* be taken in this Place for ſuch as God hath given up, caſt off and rejected, yet doth not this prove but the Light of Chriſt was once in them, and at Work in their Hearts. And further, by this Scripture it is manifeſt, that the Light of Chriſt Jeſus is in every Man; And this I know, will ſuffice in Anſwer to ſatisfie the Unprejudiced concerning thoſe Places of Scripture.

Anſw. 2. The Love of Chriſt conſtraineth us thus to Judge, becauſe if Chriſt dyed for all, then were all Dead; and as Chriſt dyed for all, ſo hath this Grace appeared to all; for he hath enlightned all that come into the World, and we know that he is able and willing to ſave all that yield Obedience to, and embrace the Tenders of his Boundleſs, Endleſs, Unlimited, Univerſal Love to Mankind

without Exception; and this we are verily perſwaded of from theſe and ſuch like Conſiderations.

1. Becauſe *God is no Reſpecter of Perſons*, Acts 10. 35. *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt and on the Unjuſt; he accepteth not the Perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more then the Poor; for they all are the Work of his Hands.*

2. Becauſe that Light which ſhined in our Dark, Ignorant, Unclean and Unbelieving Hearts before Converſion, is the very ſame in which we live and abide ſince our Converſion: That which formerly ſtood by, was an Eye witneſs to, and bore a faithful Teſtimony againſt us while we walked in Darkneſs, is the ſame which ſince the time of our believing and abiding in his Light witneſſeth with our Spirits that we are the *Children of God*: That which cauſed Trouble, Reſtleſneſs and Terror, when we lived in Unbelief, Rebellion and Diſobedience, is the ſame which cauſeth Calmneſs, Stilneſs, Settlement and Satisfaction, and bringeth forth peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs in our Souls, ſince we have believed & continued obedient thereto: That very *Light* which before convinced, reproved, judged & condemned us for all Unbelief and Unrighteouſneſs both in Heart & Life, is ſtill the ſame which doth convert, confirm, cleanſe, juſtifie and ſave; yea, that Light which before ſhined in Darkneſs, and the Darkneſs comprehended it not, is but one, and the ſame, which after it was believed and obeyed, did expel and lead out of Darkneſs, that the Light which before was eccliplſed, may now ſo ſhine before Men, that ſeeing our Good Works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven, in the Day of their Viſitation: wherefore the Love of Chriſt conſtrains us thus to judge, that the Light of Chriſt is in every Man and Woman, who is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that believe in him and obey him; becauſe when we were as Vile as the worſt of Sinners, we can witneſs that the ſame Light, which did then ſhine in Darkneſs, doth now, to the Praiſe of God, ſhine out of Darkneſs, whereof we are not aſhamed.

3. Becauſe our Lord Jeſus, who cannot Lye, hath ſaid, that man's Condemnation ariſeth only from the Contempt of and Diſobedience to this Light, ſaying, *This is the Condemnation, Light is come into the World, but men love Darkneſs rather then Light*, Jo. 3.

This

This is (the) the Condemnation that Light is come into the World. That was only, say some, *Christ's Bodily Presence upon Earth in that Day*; So then it must needs follow, that Condemnation terminated and ended in that Generation, because then that Bodily Presence expired: But we witness according to his own Words, that he is come again in Spirit; for (saith he) *They shall say, Lo here, and Lo there; but go not after them, nor follow them; look not out, for the Kingdom of God is within you!* And *as the Lightning shineth from one Part under Heaven to the other Part under Heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in his Day, but first he must suffer many Things of this Generation, and be rejected*: We testifie therefore, that these are the Dayes of the Son of Man; and Christ Jesus the Light, is come into the World, into the Souls & Consciences of Earthly, Worldly-minded and Unbelieving Men and Women; and they who love Darkness rather then Light, cannot escape Condemnation, because they neglect despise and reject so great Salvation: Therefore as the *Brazen Serpent* was lift up by *Moses* in the Wilderness, even so Christ Jesus, the Light of the World, hath God exalted with his own Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Forgiveness; wherefore he said, *When he ascended on high, he led Captivity Captive, and gave Gifts unto Men; now that he ascended, what is it but that he descended first into the lower Parts of the Earth; he that descended is the same also which ascended far above all Heavens,* THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS. And thus is his Light in every Man's Conscience, that they who feel themselves stung by the fiery Serpents in the Wilderness of Sin, Darkness and Unbelief, and look towards and believe in him, might not perish, but have Eternal Life; but whoever neglect, overlook or undervalue this only Saviour of the World, Christ Jesus the Light, the alone Guide to Rest, must necessarily perish in the Wilderness, and dye in their sins.

Luke 17. 21, 23, 24, 25.

For it is most certain, that Man's Damnation must undoubtedly arise from some of these Causes; 1.) *Either for want of Light.* Or (2.) *From the Despiency of that Light.* Or (3.) *From man's own Rebellion and Disobedience to this Light.*

Now to judge or believe that man's Condemnation is occasioned through the Want of True Saving Light, is horrid Wickedness,

because it chargeth God foolishly with Injustice; and nothing less then to say with the Evil and Unprofitable Servant, *Lord, I knew thee to be an Austere and Hard Man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; therefore I was afraid, and went and hid thy Talent in the Earth.* Yea, what greater Unmercifulness and Injustice can be charged upon God, then to say or think, *That he hath designed any Man's Ruin, and hath denyed him the Benefit of this saving Light?* When the Lord hath assured Mankind as certainly as he lives, *That he desires not the Death of any Sinner*; but that this is his Will, and herein he is pleased, *That the Wicked might forsake their Wicked Ways, and live*; *for he would, that all men should be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, which Truth is Christ, the Light.*

Neither can it be granted that man's Condemnation is occasioned through the Insufficiency of this Light of Christ; for, as hath been already proved, *He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to the Father by him, and is the Mighty Power of God unto Salvation*; which though in its first Appearance be as small as a Grain of Mustard-seed, a little Leaven, a Bruised Reed, or as Smoaking Flax, yet is it that Little Stone, cut out of the Mountains without Hands; yea, though it be rejected, disallowed, set at nought, refused and Despised by all *Babel*'s Builders, as a Poor, Inconsiderable Matter: But though these *Phrases* oppose the Appearance of Christ in Spirit, the Light, & despise him as the Day of small Things, yet is it the only precious Stone, the tryed Stone, the Corner-stone, that sure Foundation and Rock of Ages, that whosoever believe and build hereon, the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against them.

Wherefore seeing that Light is come into the World, and that the Light Christ Jesus is sufficient to redeem & save all that believe in and obey him; and that Man's Condemnation proceeds only from Disobedience and Unbelief, in rejecting the Light: It is therefore the earnest Travail of my Soul, That you, my dear and truly beloved Friends and Relations, may turn in, to the Light in your own Consciences; retire thither, and wait in the Silence of your own Wills and Wisdom, for the clear Manifestations thereof, then shall you know him whom all the World talks of, and need no more that any say, *Know the Lord*; for he will reveal himself in you: Wherefore as ye love your own Souls, love and cherish that in

in you, which hath ſhewn you the Evil of Sin, the Vanity of this Fading World, and hath been at Work many a time in your Hearts and wrought you into Tenderneſs, panting after Satisfaction from the Living Preſence of God: Oh! Love, believe only in him, hearken only to him, wait continually upon him, obey, follow and live in his Counſels; fall under his Reproofs with Meekneſs, endure his Judgment with Patience, kiſs the Son leſt he be angry, and ye periſh in the Way; chearfully reſign up your Wills, Affections, Souls, Bodies, Pleaſures, Profits, Honours, Eſtates, Liberty and Life it ſelf, to be univerſally ordered and diſpoſed by him, whoſe Name is Wonderful Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace. This is the Way to True Honour and Durable Riches: Oh therefore be perſwaded to ſtand ſingle in the Teachings, Guidance and Counſels of the Lord Jeſus; Deſpiſe him not; be not aſhamed to own him and his poor Deſpiſed Followers.

Now, that your Hearts may be carryed above the Snares that attend your Conditions, and be wholely devoted to the Lord, and become Fellow Citizens with the Saints in Light, is the earneſt Breathing and Prayer of him, who is

Your Faithful Friend,

James Jackſon.

Postscript.

Reader,

HAving mentianed some things before in general, of the Just Cause of my leaving the *Independent* People, I think it not unseasonable to give this particular Account of an Offence receiv'd from the Uneven Walking of *John James*, Pastor of the *Independents* in *Nottinghamshire*, which I signified to him before my Forsaking that Way, a Copy whereof followeth, which to this Day stands over his Head; for he never returned me an Answer to my Letter, but stirred up and incensed my Relations and others against me, telling them how greatly I had Injured, Abused and Slandered him: *But wisdom is justified of her Children.*

John James,

THe Lord knows, and thou art not wholely Ignorant, That some years lately past my Soul was plunged into a most Dreadful State; yea, and I certainly know, that unless the most precious Sons of Sion *be kept by the Mighty Power of God, and in themselves carefully observe the first Declensings of their Hearts from the Lord, they will be ensnared through the Deceitfulness of Sin, and become weak as other Men: And consider, as thou art in great Danger to be ruin'd, through the Indulgence and Flatteries of thy Brethren (some of them styling thee,* The Head of the Church, next and immediately under Christ) *and lest thou shouldst receive Harm for want of Faithfulness in Friends watching over thee in Love, I have in Love to thy Soul, and Discharge of my Duty, presented to thy serious Consideration some of the things I hear of thee, and partly believe them.*

Whereas

Whereas heretofore thou uſedſt to preach againſt National Churches, Antichriſt's Clergy, their Coveteouſneſs, Pride, Forced Maintenance, &c. and reprovedſt thy Brethren for hearing thoſe Pariſh Prieſts, with whom now thou art joyned in Combination, to augment thy Eccleſiaſtical Promotions, which before was more Conſiderable then many Parſonages in the County; and ſo thou art leading back again, licking up thy old Vomit; and of late haſt begun in ſeveral Places to Sprinkle Infants.

That many of thy Poor Brethren, at whoſe Houſes formerly thou kept'ſt Meetings, have now been neglected for above Six Years; but haſt been ever careful to viſit thy kind Benefactors at *Marnham*, *Skegby*, &c. and very punctual to keep thy Day with the *Preſbyterians* at *Nottingham* and *Cheſterfield*, where thou knoweſt thy Pay would be ſweet and certain.

It was thee only, that after that great Aſſembly was gathered at *Gamſton* by the Labours of ſome private Men, who confined the Work there to a Pack of Clergy-Men, *viz.* Thy Self, *Roſſe*, *Boſworth* and *Clark*; And by the ſame Spirit, and Prelatical Preheminence ſuſpended old *Allen* (a more Righteous Man then thy ſelf) from Exerciſing in thy Dioces.

It was the Letter writ with thy own Hand, that obſtructed the intended Marriage betwixt *John Atkinſon* and *Mary Smith*; for although ſeemingly thou pretendedſt Kindneſs to the ſaid *John*, who indeed at the ſame time was in Fellowſhip with thee, yet having Reſpect to a more peculiar Intereſt, ſecretly writ to *Northampton*, and fruſtratedſt the Hopes of the poor Man, which he never Recovered, but Languiſhed and Dyed.

And when a Letter was written to be ſent to *London*, to the Profeſſors there, on the behalf of *Robert Johnſon*, a Member of thy Church, to procure his Relief, he being there and Unknown, was exceedingly Diſtreſſed for want of Bread; thou didſt refuſe to ſubſcribe the Letter, and he was Famiſhed and Dyed.

ed before that Money got to him which was collected at *Nottingham*.

By this Relation, thou hast left thine Honest Christian Friends, which now thou seem to know, and that the Devil, by his Subtilty, hath so bewitched thee, that thou dost now scorn to own them, whom thou dost see walk in the Truth, and thou dost now joyn with the Fornicator, Earthlinefs, Pride, Bitterness and Wicked Conversation of thine Auditors; but daubest with Untempered Mortar, and preachest smooth things, Flourishes, Latin and Greek Sentences, and Eloquent Phrases, to get in, and beautify thy Words.

Remember whence thou art fallen, and Repent; elseknow for certain, Thou hast done thy work, and the Lord will make no more Use of thee; If Salt hath lost his Savour, it is henceforth good for nothing.

I am thine Offended Friend,

James Jackson.

THE END.